

# 史上第一家華語扶輪社 - 杭州扶輪社(1931)

## Hangchow Rotary Club (1931)

### The First Mandarin Speaking Club in History

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

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Hangchow Rotary Club (杭州扶輪社), chartered on 23 June 1932, was the first Mandarin speaking Club in history, located in Hangchow (*Hangzhou*), capital city of Chekiang (*Zhejiang*) Province of the Republic of China (中華民國浙江省省會杭州市). This was officially recognized by Rotary International after the visit of Douglas C. Howland, Secretary for Eastern Asia, on 14-15 December 1933. In his report, Douglas wrote:

“Although I had previously visited this Club, I was anxious to make a return visit to see how the Club was operating since they decided to change the language of the meeting from English to Chinese.

On my previous visit this was discussed and I urged them to try and effect the change for many reasons. Firstly, although it is a place of roughly half a million people, it only has a comparatively small foreign population. Secondly, by conducting their meetings in English, it excluded the possibility of getting several worthy Chinese who have small knowledge of English. Thirdly, by making a start with some clubs, I hope that it would lead them to translate some of the desirable Rotary literature into Chinese. ....

The entire business of the meeting was conducted in Chinese and I learn that they find it more interesting and naturally a much easier way of expressing themselves.

One amusing incident occurred. One of the Brazilian clubs had written to them in Portuguese and they had found one member of their club who was able to translate it. The reply was decided on and it was agreed that it should be sent in Chinese although I believe an English translation will accompany it. I imagine that it might be difficult for the Brazilian Club to find anyone capable of translating their reply. ....

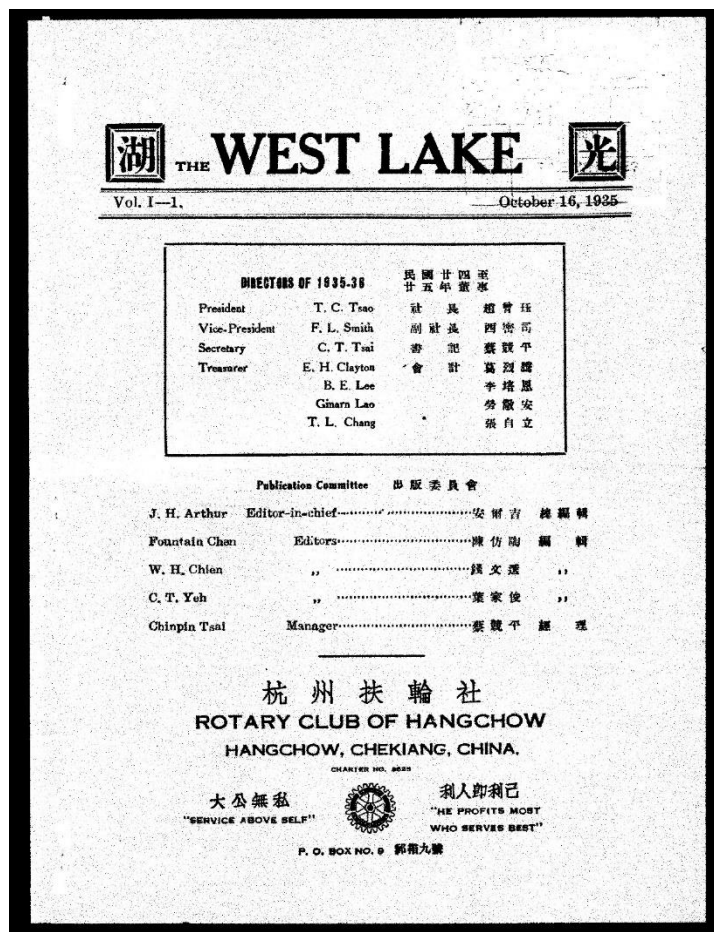
This Club has a membership now of thirty-two with some additional names that are being acted on by the membership committee. Nine of them are “foreign” members. ... With one exception, all the foreign members understand Chinese and seem to enjoy the meetings. ....

They have completed and are having printed for circulation among the other Chinese clubs, a charge to new members translated into Chinese. This charge I believe was originally prepared by Carlo Bros\*. They are also anxious to co-operate with Dr. Fong Foo-Sec in helping with translation of other Rotary literature.”

(\*Note: Carlo Bros – Italian, Shanghai Rotary Club President 1929-1930)

## The First Ever Rotary Club Bi-lingual Bulletin in History

Hangchow Rotary Club did not publish any regular newsletters until it was four years old. On 16 October 1935, the Club published its first semi-monthly bulletin 《The West Lake 湖光》 in both Chinese and English languages:



*Some of the 38 Hangchow Rotarians as in 1935*



## The Birth of Hangchow Rotary Club in 1931

In 1931, Shanghai Rotary Club (上海扶輪社) appointed Luther M. Jee (朱神恩) (*Shanghai Rotary Club President 1927-1928*) to be Chair of the Rotary Extension Committee. On 27 March 1931, a group of twenty members of the Shanghai Rotary Club went to Hangchow (*Hangzhou*) and met with twelve leading local citizens at the Lakeview Hotel (西湖旅館) for dinner at which time plans for the organization of a new club in the city were discussed. On 11 April 1931 another trip to Hangchow was made by about ten Shanghai Rotarians to attend the formal organization of the new club. This meeting held at the Hangchow Y.M.C.A. was presided over by Dr. Fong Foo-Sec (鄭富灼博士), President-Elect of Shanghai Club. Luther M. Jee delivered a speech. George A. Fitch (費吳生) (*Shanghai Rotary Club President 1930-1931*) inducted the 24 charter members of Hangchow Rotary Club. Witnessed were also George Ernest Marden (馬頓) (*Shanghai Rotary Club President 1928-1929*) and Julean Herbert Arnold (安立德) (*U.S. Commercial Attaché in China, 1914-1940*). Membership Application was then sent to Rotary International. Admission was granted on 23 June 1932 with Charter No. 3525. The application process took almost 10 months due to the unstable exchange rates problem delayed in remitting the charter fee of USD 100.

### List of Charter Members with Classifications

1. [President] Robert Johnston McMullen (明思德) (*Institutions & Hospitals*) (*Lakeland Community Centre*)
2. [Vice President] Chang Sin-Bea (張信培) (*Medicine*) (*Pao Ching Hospital*)
3. [Secretary] Jay Charles Oliver (伍立夫) (*Young Men's Christian Association*) (*Y.M.C.A.*)
4. Aldrich Barton (*Machinery & Equipment*) (*Andersen, Meyer & Co., Ltd.*)
5. Chan Ti-Cheng (*Highway Transportation*) (*Chekiang Highway Administration*)
6. Y. T. Chou (*Manufacturing - Raw Silk*) (*Hangchow Silk Filature*)
7. Chow Yu-Kun (周玉坤) (*Chekiang Telephone Administration*)
8. John Curtis (高約翰) (*Religion - Protestant Churches*) (*Chinese Episcopal Church*)
9. S. L. Feng (*Government Service - Salt Administration*)
10. Robert Ferris Fitch (費佩德) (*Literature*) (*USA Board of Foreign Missions*)
11. Hsu Lee-King (*Silk Goods Manufacturing*) (*Ching Chen Silk Mills*)
12. Hsu Un-Bay (徐恩培) (*Banking - Domestic*) (*Chekiang Provincial Bank*)
13. Ginarn Lao (勞傲安) (*Hotels*) (*Lakeview Hotel*)
14. Baen Elmer Lee (李培恩) (*Education - Colleges*) (*Hangchow Christian College*)
15. Lee Hsi-Mou (李熙謀) (*Education - Engineering*) (*Chekiang University*)
16. Pai Ming-Hsing (潘銘新) (*Light & Power Service*) (*Hangchow Electric Company*)
17. G. A. H. Rose (*Bacteriology*) (*Public Health Laboratory of Chekiang*)
18. Arthur M. Shaw (蕭歐姆) (*Sanitary Engineering*) (*Reconstruction Commission*)
19. Bernard K. W. Shaw (壽景偉) (*Banking - Foreign Exchange*) (*Bank of China*)
20. Stephen Douglas Sturton (蘇達立) (*Hospitals*) (*Church Missionary Society*)
21. Tsao Tsem-Cha (趙曾珪) (*Communications*) (*Radio Broadcast Administration*)
22. Tu Chen-Yuen (杜鎮遠) (*Railroad Transportation*) (*Hang-Kiang Railway*)
23. Yang S-Da (*Medicine*) (*Zen Ai Hospital*)
24. Paxon Zhee (徐伯聲) (*Oil Products Distributing*) (*Standard Oil Company of New York*)





*Hangchow Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) Building was erected in 1918.  
Hangchow Rotary Club held the weekly Friday luncheon meetings here.  
Club Secretary Jay Charles Oliver was the Associate General Secretary of Hangchow Y. M.C.A.*



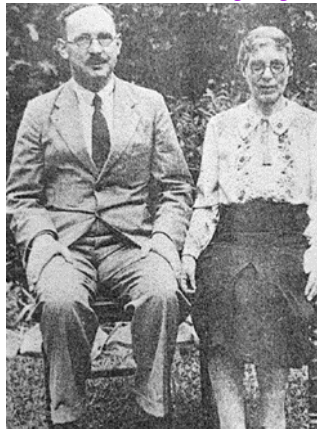
*Robert F. Fitch (費佩德) and Mrs. Fitch in Hangchow Residence 1908-1945  
Born in Shanghai 1873, elder brother of George A. Fitch (費吳生), Robert was the second generation of  
an American Presbyterian missionary family in China since 1870.  
Robert was President 1922-1931 of Hangchow Christian College (之江大學校長 1922-1931),  
and was author of the book 《Hangchow-Chekiang itineraries》*



*Baen Elmer Lee (李培恩), Hangchow native, President 1931-1949 of Hangchow Christian College (之江大學校長 1931-1949), graduate of Soochow University (東吳大學), Master of Arts-Chicago University 1919; Master of Business Administration-New York University 1921. After WW II, Lee joined Stephen Sturton to re-charter the Club in 1947 and served as Vice President.*



*Revd. Dr. Stephen Douglas Sturton (牧師蘇達立醫生) (front right 3), Superintendent 1928-1950 of Church Missionary Society Hangchow Hospital (廣濟醫院), from England, offering general and leprosy treatments. His Chinese language was trained in the Hong Kong Diocese.*



*Stephen D. Sturton and wife – Wartime heroes interned by the Imperial Japanese Forces in 1942-1945. Stephen re-chartered the Club on 23 April 1947 and served as President.*



*Bernard K. W. Shaw (壽景偉) (aka Shaw Kinn-Wei, 壽毅成), a 1926 Ph.D. from Columbia University, U.S.A. Author of these books: 《Democracy and Finance in China - a study in the Development of Fiscal Systems and Ideals》《財政學》《應用統計學》《日本專賣制度考略》*



## Another Rotary wheel?

Look again. It resembles that cogged emblem, but is not one. As a matter of fact, it was a piece of jadeite and was crafted during the Han Dynasty of China – 206 B.C. to 263 A.D.! It measures 2.5 inches (6+ cm) in diameter. What its original purpose was unknown, but as a gift from the Hangchow Rotary Club to Douglas C. Howland, Rotary International Secretary for Eastern Asia, that made a capital memento of his visit in December 1933. Douglas recalled after return to Chicago:

“I shall always prize very highly. It is a wheel carved in jade and mounted on a carved black wood stand. ... .. is at a glance almost exactly a replica of a Rotary wheel. ... .. So far I can ascertain it has no particular significance and was not used in those days as a club button. It has no characters engraved on ... .. it might re-awaken the old argument as to where the Rotary idea first started. I believe 206 B.C. almost holds the record.”



## Scenes of Hangchow in the 1930s

